Amendments to the Specification:

Page 1, amend the paragraph beginning at line 11 to read as follows.

~~General~~ Generally, masks used in an exposure technique each have a structure of providing, on a mask blank transparent to exposure light, a light-shielding pattern made from a metal film such as chrome. An example of the manufacturing process includes the following. First of all, a metal film made from light-shielding chrome etc. is deposited on the transparent mask blank, and an electron beam sensitive resist film is coated thereon. Subsequently, an electron beam is illuminated to a specified location of the electron beam sensitive resist film by an electron beam writer etc., and this illuminated resist film is developed to form a desired resist pattern. At this time, there is the case in which a resist pattern (defect) other than the desired resist pattern may be formed. Thereafter, by using, as an etching mask, the resist pattern formed on the mask blank to etch the lower metal film, a desired light-shielding pattern made from a metal film is formed. At this time, light-shielding film defect is also formed by a resist pattern other than the desired resist pattern. Then, after removing the left resist pattern, presence or absence of the defect is determined by carrying out defect inspection. If any defect is detected, for example, a laser beam or ion beam is irradiated to the detected defect to remove it. Subsequently, after a mask without defect is prepared through a washing step, a protection pellicle is mounted on a main surface (surface on which a desired light-shielding pattern is formed) so that no fault by adhesion of foreign matters occurs. A half-tone type phase-shift mask is also fabricated in almost the same process by simply replacing the metal film with a half-tone phase-shift film.

Page 3, amend the paragraph beginning on line 8 to read as follows:

However, in the above mask fabrication technique, there is an important problem of how a mask fabrication time is shortened. Particularly, with regard to the mask whose ~~a~~ resist film is composed of light-shielding patterns, there becomes an important problem of how efficient inspection and/or defect repair are carried out in actually producing the mask.

Page 3, amend the paragraph beginning at line 21 to read as follows:

The above and other objects and novel features of the present invention will ~~be appear~~ become apparent from the description of this specification and the accompanying drawings.

Page 30, amend the paragraph beginning on line 12 to read as follows:

Each semiconductor region 14 for source and drain of the nMIS Qn is set to have a so-called LDD (Lightly Doped Drain) structure with an n^--type semiconductor region 14a and an n^+-type semiconductor region 14b. In both the n^--type semiconductor region 14a and the n^+-type semiconductor region 14b, for example, ~~phosphor~~ phosphorous (P) or arsenic (As) is introduced, but the impurity concentration of the n^--type one is set lower than that of the n^+-type one. Meanwhile, each semiconductor region 15 for source and drain of the pMIS Qp is set to have a so-called LDD structure with a p^--type semiconductor region 15a and a p^+-type semiconductor region 15b. In both the p^--type semiconductor region 15a and the p^+-type semiconductor region 15b, for example, boron is introduced, but the impurity concentration of the p^--type one is set lower than that of the p^+-type one.

Page 32, amend the paragraph beginning on line 14 to read as follows:

Referring to FIGs. 15 to 24, one example of a mask fabrication method according to the second embodiment will be described in line with the process chart of FIG. 14. First of all, there is prepared a metal-equipped mask substrate in which a metal film comprising stacking, for example, ~~chrome~~ chromium (Cr) or stacking ~~chrome~~ chromium oxide (CrO) on ~~chrome~~ chromium is deposited on the entire surface of the first main surface of a mask substrate (step 200 of FIG. 14). Subsequently, a resist film is coated on a metal film of the first main surface of the mask substrate, and thereafter desired patterns are written on the resist film by an electron beam writing processing, and resist patterns for etching mask are formed by further performing development and an after-treatment (steps 201 to 203 of FIG. 14). Then, after the lower metal film is etched using the resist pattern as an etching mask, the resist pattern is removed (steps 204 and 205 of FIG. 14). One example of the mask at this stage is shown in FIGs. 15 and 16. FIG. 15 is a plan view showing the entirety of the mask RM3 in course of the manufacture of the second embodiment, and FIG. 16 is a cross-sectional view taken along line A3-A3 of FIG. 15. In the chip transferred region CAm of the mask RM3, a plurality of metal patterns 20a are arranged for light-shielding. These metal patterns 20a are light-shielding patterns for transferring the integrated circuit patterns. An area from the outer circumference of the chip transferred region CAm to that of the mask substrate 1 is covered with a metal pattern 20b. Part of this metal pattern 20b is removed and a plurality of light transparent patterns 5b and 5c are formed. Light transparent patterns 5c are mark patterns corresponding to the respective metal patterns 3a of the above-mentioned masks RM1 and RM2.

Page 41, amend the paragraph beginning on line 18 to read as follows:

Further, the metal pattern that forms the light-shielding body in the mask is not limited to ~~chrome~~ chromium and can be variously changed and modified, and, for example, a refractory metal film such as tungsten and molybdenum or a refractory metal nitride film in which they are nitrided or the like may be used.